

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES MARCH 1, 2004

Chief Darrel Fournier called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:05pm in Room 438 (Judiciary) of the State House, Augusta, Maine. Members present were Michael Albert, Chief Jeffrey Cammack, John Cannon, Representative Robert Duplessie, Chief Darrel Fournier, Albert Godfrey, Sr., Geoffrey Maker, Harty Norris, Chief Jethro Pease, Charles Soltan, Joe Thomas (for John Dean), Leslie Wiles (for Bill Williams), Steve Willis and Susan Pinette (staff). Members Jack Berry, Representative Patricia Blanchette, Jay Bradshaw, Senator Bruce Bryant, Representative Thomas Bull, Art Cleaves, Edward Johnston, Senator Richard Nass, and David Wacker were excused. Tom Parent of the Northeast Compact and Robert Gardiner of the Maine Emergency Management Agency attended today's meeting as guests of the Fire Commission.

There were two corrections to the February 2, 2004 minutes- 1) Jack Berry was excused, not present, and 2) the March meeting date on page one should read March 1, not March 2.

A motion by Charlie Soltan, seconded by Al Godfrey, to accept the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports of Committees

The Training Facilities Committee reported they are making progress on the final report to the Fire Commission and expect to have a final draft at the April meeting.

The Spring Conference Committee reported the invitations have been mailed and as of March 1st, 120 people have pre-registered for the March 11th conference. The final version of the conference invitation/brochure was distributed to members. The Fire Commission expressed their appreciation to all the individuals at Maine Fire Training and Education and the Maine Municipal Association for their hard work and efforts in the design, distribution and coordination of the Spring conference brochure. The Spring conference committee is finalizing plans for the morning speakers and the afternoon work sessions. Governor Baldacci's attendance has been confirmed and he will present the Fire Commission's three 2003 Best Practice Awards at the conference luncheon. The Fire Commission agreed to defray the registration cost to two individuals who had mistakenly missed a Federal Emergency Management Agency presentation. Fire Commission members were also encouraged to pre-register as soon as possible. Members also discussed ideas for publicizing the conference and agreed to do a press release immediately after the conference.

OLD BUSINESS

Fire Commission members were reminded of the Legislative reception on March 10th at the Ground Round Restaurant. The event will take place from 4-7:00pm and is hosted by the Professional Fire Fighters of Maine, Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters and the Maine Fire Chiefs.

Members received a six-page handout from Fire Commission member Charlie Soltan on the revenue numbers for the fire tax revenues and the larger premium tax revenues. Members discussed the various charts, numbers and recommendations from the Revenue Forecasting Committee (December 2003), the importance to the General Fund, and the significance of these numbers to the funding solutions for the State Fire Marshal's Office and Maine Fire Training and Education. Members learned during the discussion and explanation of these charts about a growth in the premium tax lines and the retaliatory tax. Members agreed the Fire Service affects all areas and should be funded through the General Fund and that legislation be submitted in the 122nd legislature requesting such funding. A committee, including the legislative members of the Fire Commission, will be formed to work on drafting legislation.

The Truss Construction committee reported plans to have a presentation and discussion at the May meeting. Representatives from various groups have been invited and the Fire Commission expects to propose legislation in 2005.

The Fire Commission heard a report regarding the use of the Maine Yankee facility as a possible site for the State Fire Academy. Fire Commission members attending the tour of the old Maine Yankee site reported a "chilly reception" to their proposal, however they will continue to explore alternate sites.

NEW BUSINESS

The Fire Commission is required to elect new officers in April of every year. Chair Fournier appointed the following members to the Personnel/Election committee-

Jethro Pease (Chair)
Michael Albert
Pat Blanchette

The committee will choose candidates for the four officer positions and present their nominees to the Fire Commission at the April 5th meeting.

In April, Chief Fournier and Steve Willis will attend the Fire Caucus in Washington D.C. They expect to report to the Fire Commission at the May meeting.

Fire Commission members received an update from Robert Gardiner of MEMA regarding state wide mutual aide. Members were encouraged to review the document and forward any comments or suggestions to either Art Cleaves or Robert Gardiner.

Tom Parent of the Northeast Compact made a presentation to Fire Commission members on collaboration of training (fire, EMS and police) and NE Compact's plans to sponsor a conference in Portland in 2005. Mr. Parent, a former member of the Fire Commission, distributed a resume from Gordon Graham of Graham Research Consultants of California. NE Compact hopes to invite Mr. Graham as featured speaker to the 2005 conference and has asked the Fire Commission to be a sponsor. Members discussed the possibility of sponsorship and the Fire Commission's budget.

A motion by Steve Willis, seconded by Al Godfrey, to recommend the Fire Commission support the Northeast Compact's endeavor to hold a collaborative training conference and to invite Gordon Graham of Graham Research Consultants as speaker. The Fire Commission will later access whether they can offer financial support. The motion passed unanimously.

The Fire Commission's 2003 final report was distributed and members inquired whether it would be available on the website. The Fire Commission also plans to make a formal presentation to the Criminal Justice Committee.

Members discussed holding the April meeting at the State House and whether the Legislature would still be in session.

Members agreed to the following meeting schedule:

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| Monday, April 5 th | 1:00pm | State House |
| Monday, May 3 rd | 1:00pm | Maine EMS |
| Monday, June 7 th | 1:00pm | Maine EMS |

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Fournier adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

